Chapter VIII [p. 229]

Political Organization

631 The political organization in Bornu can be seen as a continuum of power and authority running from small to large scale structures. These include the extended household organization, the hamlet and ward, the village area, the district, and finally the state, which today has a place in the Northern Region and the Federation of Nigeria. [648] In Bornu, each expansion of the scale of the organization includes part or all of the previous one, while cross-cutting the entire system and intersecting it with varying intensities at different levels is the colonial administration.

621 ### The Hamlet and the Ward

Within the point of view of the present discussion the basic unit of political structure is the extended household organization [571] with its head as the primary governmental figure. The processes of fission and fusion by which these units expand or contract within themselves has already been described (see above pp. 80 - 92).

571 There is however a larger scaled process of fission and fusion which
621 integrates that previously discussed with a wider political organization. This is the underlying process of Hamlet and Ward formation. The following examples illustrate this process in action.

[361] Approximately three miles south-west of Magumeri is the
[632] small village of Gworongo (pop. *circa* 250) which falls within the
[249] administrative jurisdiction of the town area of Magumeri. Surrounding
[276] the town are small plots of a specialized crop (gworongo)(1) which is sold
[302] in the local markets along with tobacco flowers as a stimulant and a cosmetic for colouring women's teeth. In 1953 one of these full-time

(1) *Solanacea Incanum*